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## THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

SP - 221/81  
28 October 1981  
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## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Hearings before the SASC Subcommittee on Strategic and Theater  
Nuclear Forces, 0900-1300, 26 October 1981

1. The Senate Subcommittee has begun hearings on the US strategic modernization package. Our particular session was scheduled in order to update the members on Soviet strategic offensive and defensive capabilities. Briefings were held in open and closed sessions. The open session involved a briefing by DIA based on the unclassified DoD publication, "Soviet Military Power." The NIO/SP, [redacted] attended the session as an observer. After the DIA briefing the Subcommittee went into executive session, in which NIO/SP presented a classified briefing on Soviet strategic force developments. The executive session was attended by NIC, NFAC and DIA personnel (see attached list), who participated in the discussion ensuing from the briefing by NIO/SP. Senators Warner (the Chairman), Jackson, Exon, Cohen, and Nunn attended at least part of the closed hearings; Senator Levin was present at the unclassified session.

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2. Questions from the Subcommittee touched on many aspects of Soviet strategic forces, but the clear areas of interest, in both the open and closed sessions, were Soviet air defense capabilities and the potential vulnerability of the MX ICBM. Specifically, there was interest in the effectiveness of Soviet low-altitude air defenses against the B-1, cruise missiles, and "stealth" bomber. Senator Cohen, for example, requested a year-by-year projection showing "measures of effectiveness" of Soviet air defenses against various US penetrating aerodynamic systems. There was concern expressed by Senator Levin in the open hearing that Dr. Perry, as USDR&E last year, had told the committee that the new low altitude air defense system would be fully in place in 1987, (thereby making the B-1 an ineffective penetrator), but that now DIA is saying that Soviet air defenses will not stop the B-1 until the early to mid-1990s. It is likely that the Subcommittee will continue to press the intelligence community to devise assessments showing the interaction of Soviet air defenses with new US bombers and cruise missiles.

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3. Discussion of the MX concerned prospects for its survivability in the "superhard" silo basing mode. The essence of the response was that future Soviet warhead accuracy and yield should be able to keep pace with a US silo-hardening program, and that the Soviet accuracy improvements that we are projecting do not result from technological breakthroughs, but rather from reasonable modifications to their current systems. However, the uncertainties attendant with our projections of Soviet technological capabilities--as well as some reliability problems with their ICBM forces--were emphasized in this discussion. Senator Warner indicated that he would ask that the Department of Defense supply the intelligence community with details of its ICBM improvement program so that the intelligence community can make more detailed assessments of US ICBM vulnerability. During the course of this discussion, [redacted] DIA, suggested that it would be useful to have US Air Force and intelligence representatives appear in a "joint session" on the subject.

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4. Senator Warner thanked the witnesses for their participation in what he considered a very worthwhile session. He was especially appreciative of the free expression of differing views on substantive intelligence matters. He indicated that the witnesses may be recalled for subsequent discussions on these issues as the Subcommittee tries to reach some decision on US strategic force improvement programs before a mid-December 1981 recess. Questions for the record on these hearings will be submitted to the intelligence community for written response. Senator Warner also indicated that there will be pressure to declassify more material on the Soviet threat, to obtain US and Allied public support for the US force modernization initiatives.

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[redacted]  
National Intelligence Officer  
for Strategic Programs

Attachment

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